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LECTURE

ON

TEACHERS' MORALS AND MANNERS,

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DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,

At Keene, N. H., August, 1851.

By HENRY K. OLIVER,

OF LAWRENCE, MASS.

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LECTURE

ON

TEACHERS' MORALS AND MANNERS.

BY HENRY K. OLIVER,
OF LAWRENCE, MASS.

We are here assembled, specially to turn our thoughts to that great subject, to the influence of which, more than to any other source, we owe all of happiness, all of national greatness, all of true grandeur, all of pride for the past, all of hope for the future, that we now possess, or ever can expect. And who can find words adequate to the true expression of what we ought to be? Who shall be found bold enough to unfold to our vision all that the future has in store for us, if rightly appreciating the true dignity of our position and of our destiny, we guard ourselves against the encroachments of ignorance, vice, infidelity and every other baneful influence, by erecting, on the broadest, and deepest, and firmest foundation, a superstructure of the most diffusive Christian education. What skill of artist could then sketch, or what glowing canvas could contain the story of this peo-

ple, from the feeble birth-ship of the nation, as with fluttering sail and trembling step,—yet home of brave hearts, and enduring heroism,—she neared the rock-bound coast of our great bay, to that resistless tide, now sweeping its emigrating thousands towards that other mighty ocean, which skirts our land on California and Oregon's far shores. In contemplating this deeply interesting picture, I seem to be carried backward to the earliest days of our history, and standing upon the upper height of some lofty Pisgah of our continent, as Moses looked back towards the desert, and forward towards the promised land, so I bend my sight towards the horizon of the dim east, and behold the broad waste of boundless sea, whose waves beat against and mingle with the bending sky. As I gaze yet more, there ariseth out of the sea, "a little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand." And as I wonder what the vision may be, it swells upon my sight, and "it is as the way of a ship in the midst of the sea," and I hear a voice, as of an angel, which saith unto me, "Behold, it is the coming of a nation, which God hath essayed to take from the midst of another nation, by signs and by wonders, and by a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm." And now turn thine eyes westward, and declare what is the other vision. And I look, as it were, "far down the gulf of time," and "Behold! a great multitude, which no man could number, from all nations and kindred and people and tongues, and to them is given the land in possession, and they are filling it and replenishing it, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same." And yet again the angel saith unto me, "Ask now of the days that are

past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the face of the earth, and ask, from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such great thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it." No, my friends, no such amazing contrast hath ever been known; and if it were not that "with God all things are possible," one would be almost ready to believe that the like could never again be known. They were the feeblest of the feeble, faint, few, yet fearless; a wilderness and desolate snows of winter before them; a wild, an untried coast, a frozen soil, the terror of the savage dwellers of the land, a scanty supply of stores; homeless, houseless men and women and tender children,—yet all was nought to them, because there dwelt in every bosom the unquenchable fires of liberty—liberty, civil and religious. Loving women, and daring men, what could they not fearlessly encounter? What have they not surely brought to pass? And the deep secret of the whole success lies in the simple truth, that they were men of the Church and of the School-house. Blest badges of New-England! sure sources of all her greatness! Let me traverse through the wide fields of the air, at such towering height, that I can take into my range of sight all of cities and towns and villages and hamlets that dot the face of the revolving earth, and I will tell you where the sons of New-England congregate, and where they make their home. It will be where I find these marks of their peculiar way of life, the spire and the school. And it is to these we are to trace her greatness, and to the continued existence of these we are to bind our hopes of her future influences in directing and controling

the destinies of the nation. Attica was the smallest in territorial extent of all the Grecian States, yet the influence of Athens was felt throughout all Greece, and has not yet ceased to make itself known and commended, in all that is beautiful and elaborate in eloquence and in art. The rival cities of Greece dreaded, yet acknowledged, her power,—a power which eclipsed their splendor and endangered their safety. And the origin and permanence of this power lay deeply bedded in the very nature of the mental and physical education of the people. "Their powers were excited by emulation, inflamed by opposition, nourished by interest, strengthened and elevated by a sense of personal honor and the hope of immortal fame." Thus were all their energies awakened and displayed in the field, in the senate, in the academy, and in the studios of her painters and sculptors.

Such a people could not but be great; and longer had they endured, and more widely had their influence been felt, had the blest adornment, the hallowing leaven, the preservative force of Christianity, been mingled with the other elements of their greatness. There was indeed the school and the academy, but the spire was wanting. Tell me not that there was a religion established and recognized, and felt in its way. I grant it, because I know it. But it was debasing heathenism, not elevating Christianity. It was a religion that made the masses fools and abject, instead of raising them to their just position as men and as immortals.

Now New-England is the smallest subdivision of the United States, and the several States which compose it, can only keep their just foothold of influence,

and make their sway felt in the pulsation of the heart of this mighty people, by the moral and intellectual power they shall exert. The whole Union beyond our limits looks hither and sends hither, for their preachers and their teachers. A friend once told me, that of three hundred and sixty-six teachers whom he met in Georgia, three hundred and sixty were from the Eastern States; and hundreds of others are going out from amongst us, carrying our habits, our thoughts, our wisdom and our name. It is by our mind alone that we can expect to maintain our power,—the power of intellect and thought,—when all other influence may be of the smallest. If faithful to our privileges and to ourselves, we shall surely accomplish it. It was the "poor man,"—not the rich nor the powerful, but the "poor wise man," poor and neglected,—that by his wisdom delivered the city, when the "great king came and besieged it."

On this point, the influence of Christianity and of a Christian education upon the permanence of our institutions, we are entirely too thoughtless. Nay, we are all but wholly forgetful. Let the eyes of a blind man, blind from birth, be opened, all at once, to the glory of the stars, to the mild lustre of the moon and the gorgeous blaze of the sun, and in what an ecstasy of delight would he shout for wonder and joy! In what unspeakable happiness would he revel, as he contemplated the variegated rainbow, the glories of the rising and setting sun, the plumage of birds, the flowers of the field and of the garden; and, in fine, all the amazing display of wonderful sights that fill and adorn God's beautiful world! But how is it with us, who, in the plenitude of perfect vision, have seen

all these sights from our youth upwards? We pass by them, as almost worthless,—"as the idle wind, which we regard not." Why, within a month, I have seen men and women, too indifferent to the sight, to take the trouble of turning their eyes upward, to look upon the most glorious and gorgeous rainbow that ever spanned the sky,—that unspeakably magnificent arch of promise, all glittering with gems and gold,

> Binding the "earth
> With one entire and perfect chrysolite."

The only excuse I could find for them was, that they were going home from a hard day's work, and were probably too tired and too hungry, to gaze at raree-shows, either on earth or in heaven.

So it is with us. We are as blind men in the midst of wondrous sights. We are morally blind to the great well-spring of our civil and social happiness. As was beautifully and justly said by the late eminent English jurist, Sir Allan Parke, at a public meeting in London: "We live in the midst of blessings, till we are utterly insensible of their greatness and of the source from which they flow. We speak of our civilization, our arts, our freedom, our laws,—and forget entirely how large a share is due to Christianity. Blot Christianity out of man's history, and what would his laws have been, what his civilization? Christianity is mixed up with our very being and our very life; there is not a familiar object around us which does not wear a different aspect, because the light of Christian love is upon it; not a law which does not owe its truth and gentleness to Chris-

tianity; not a custom which cannot be traced in all its holy, beautiful parts to the Gospel."

Every line of these expressions is filled with truth. From such obtuseness of mental vision, should we suddenly wake, we should feel all the rapture which the blind man felt, when the miracle of Christ poured light upon his sightless orbs, and when, to his fully restored vision, God's glorious earth and heaven were revealed.

I make then this point, that education, to be permanent and true in its influence, must partake largely of Christianity as an element; and that our institutions, to be abiding and trust-worthy, and to work out all the good beginnings and just expectations of our fathers, must be leavened with the Christian element of preservation.

I presume I need not argue the necessity of a religious education before an assembly of New-England men and women, and New-England teachers. "Are ye masters of Israel and know not these things?" The necessity, then, of such education being granted, the question comes at once before us, how is it to be accomplished? I find on the shelves of my library a book entitled a "History of the various Denominations of the Christian Religion;" and I examine the book to see what this term "various" may have for its limitation, and behold "their name is legion," and I should be very unwilling to be understood as advocating the indoctrination of pupils into a knowledge of all the peculiarities of these several varieties. Such no teacher could do, or would have a right to do, and such is not my meaning. A teacher is employed for a definite purpose. To that he must devote all his

energies and apply all his skill. He is to instruct the children under his charge in what is usually understood by the phrase "useful learning," and such "useful learning," in its various phases, is arranged to be taught in our several schools, according to their grades of Primary, Grammar and High Schools.

But the laws of Massachusetts, after declaring what sorts of schools shall be established, and what studies shall be pursued, impose, and wisely too, a most solemn and important duty upon *all* teachers, specifying distinctly who they are. It declares it to be the duty of "the president, professors and tutors of the University at Cambridge, and of the several colleges, and of all preceptors and teachers of academies, and all other instructors of youth, to exert their best endeavors to impress on the minds of children and youth, committed to their care and instruction, the principles of piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love to their country, humanity, and universal benevolence, sobriety, industry and frugality, chastity, moderation and temperance, and those other virtues which are the ornament of human society and the basis upon which a republican constitution is founded; and it shall be the duty of such instructors to endeavor to lead their pupils into a clear understanding of the tendency of the above-mentioned virtues, to preserve and perfect a republican constitution and secure the blessings of liberty, as well as to promote their future happiness; and, also, to point out to them the evil tendency of the opposite vices."

What language of commendation shall I find strong enough to express the high admiration due to the mind that engendered, the hand that penned, and the

people that adopted these glorious sentiments. Long live the republic whose statute-book they adorn! I wish they could be blazoned in starlike letters upon the broad sky, that all the world may read them as a daily lesson. In times of imminent peril, the Roman Senate gave full power to their Consuls to see that the republic should receive no harm. Teachers of New-England, the State requires you, by a greater, more enduring and holier law, to guard her, by the practical and constant enforcement of these great principles, against every inroad of more powerful, because more subtle foes, than Gauls, or Goths, or barbarian enemies, of any name or strength.

Does not this single article of the law comprise all the great, distinctive, practical features of an exalted Christian character? Let me be understood, that I make no reference to disputed points of doctrinal belief. My neighbor may believe many matters to be essential parts of Christianity, about which I may not be so precise. He and I may actively discuss many points, and ardently canvass their relative importance, and, after all, they shall remain only points of doubtful disputation. But there are principles, which all classes of Christians, with one consent, believe and acknowledge to be wholly essential, about which there never has been and never can be any dispute, and which therefore every Teacher, in any school, however miscellaneous may be the religious creeds of the parents of the attending children, may and must inculcate. We all believe that there is a God; we all believe that He has made revelations to men; that He has sent prophets, a Saviour, and apostles; and that He authenticated their mission by

giving them extraordinary preternatural powers. We all believe in the immortality of the soul. We all believe that a life of holiness is essential to a life of happiness; and that this life of happiness is connected, in some form or other, with forgiveness of sins through the Saviour. We all believe that the points I have quoted from the statutes of Massachusetts, are indispensable elements, if we would make up the character of a good man,—a man perfect, so far as mere man can be made perfect. On all this broad neutrality of common ground, there is scope and verge enough for all to stand, and for every teacher to do a great and good work. Have you, Teachers! been faithful in these matters? Have you complied with conscience? Have you obeyed the law? And as this word "Teachers," comes up to my lips, I feel my most ardent sympathies stirred within me and drawn forth. Man and boy, teacher and pupil, I was an indweller of the school-room for forty years save one; and of these, a quarter of a century was passed in imparting instruction to the young. May I not justly say, "Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh." Have I not a right to contend, that higher respect and greater honor should be awarded to those, whose energies are enlisted to forward the incommensurably great work of education? Have I not a right to complain, when I witness the stinted and sparse honors and emoluments that are too often doled out to those who labor in this great vocation,—a vocation, to which the happiness of the nation, moral and physical, is inseparably connected? Have I not a right to complain, when I find them made objects of ridicule in the pages of some of the most

popular and celebrated literature of modern times? Need I mention Dr. Pangloss, and Ichabod Crane, and Dominie Sampson, and Mr. Squeers of Do-the-boys' Hall? Need I remind you of the Sleeping Mistress of the "School in Repose,"—fair, fat, and fifty? or of the shrivel-faced master of the "School in an Uproar," those well-known pictures by Henry Richter?

I have now in my recollection two samples of decayed school-masters. They lived in one of the largest cities of New-England; and having spent a long life in the business of instruction, had well fulfilled their several duties. Kept upon pay just enough to feed the stomachs and clothe the backs of themselves and their progeny, they gradually ripened in years, turned to "the sere and yellow leaf," and "went to seed." Useless as teachers, from the wasting influence of their professional tasks and from the decrepitude of old age, the tender sympathy of those about them made one of them "a parish clerk, to say amen" on holy-days, and the other an almshouse chaplain,—each at one hundred dollars per-annum and no perquisites. They lived

> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
> They died,—and from all memories passed away.

These somewhat extended prefatory thoughts bring me to the consideration of my principal topics.

I deem the occasion appropriate to my addressing myself specially to the Teachers who are connected with this Institute. And I now ask their candid hearing to the thoughts which I may embody in

words,—thoughts which constantly presented themselves to my mind, when I was in the "harness and strife" of my school-master days, and which have never faded out of my memory. These are upon the *Morals and Manners which should characterize the Teacher;* and both these, if of the right sort, are legitimate fruits and flowers from true Christian seed.

Our countrymen have gradually fallen into negligent habits in their mode of conversation, and in their general bearing and carriage. This fault grows, in part at least, out of our notions of independence. We are so sure that we are the greatest, the most enlightened nation on the face of the earth, that whatever we do or say, *must* be right, simply because *we* say, or do it; and that it is morally impossible for us to think, say, or do any thing repugnant to sound sense and honest truth, either in morals or manners. We are so sure that we must not and will not bow down to any earthly potentate, that very many of us are particularly careful not to bow to any body, for fear, apparently, of getting the neck into a bad habit that way. We are so specially determined that we will not bend the knee to power, that we forego to kneel even at our devotions, and sit when we pray in the house of God, and rise only in complimentary respect to "the sound of the cornet, the flute, the sackbut and all manner of instruments, and when we hear the voice of the singing-men and the singing-women."

This steady and stubborn independence is infused into the whole heart of our people. It shows itself in the young and in the old, modified only, and that slightly, by the occasional influence of association with men and women of high intellectual culture and

of a studious and cautious regard to the proprieties of refined society. Now I do not object to the general feeling of independence which pervades the great mass of our people. I hope it will never die out. I hope it will continue to exert a healthful influence, until we shall become as independent of ignorance, and as free from the shackles of vice and immorality, as we are free from the thraldom of foreign power. I hope it will continue to diffuse its wholesome and life-giving energies, through the great heart of all the people, until the words of our Declaration of Independence, "that all men are born free and equal," shall be uncontradicted by any inconsistency, through the whole length and breadth of the land. I hope it will not cease to operate, until the sun that traverses our heavens, shall shine on none but freemen, from "sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of our earth." But I cannot see any necessity for any declaration of independence from the power of those "small, sweet courtesies of life," that betoken the perfectness of good breeding. And I am so singular in my notions in these matters, as to believe that there is some, not very remote, connection between the manner in which a man carries his body, and disposes of his hat, and sits in a chair, (whether upon four or two of its legs,) and his moral qualifications.

Education, and you, as its administrators, have something more to look after, than the mere training of the intellect. The healthful and graceful activity of the bodily, as well as of the mental powers, is to be cared for, in the great business of education. A sound mind and a sound body are both to be attempted. But we, in our excess of effort in cultivating the

intellect, almost wholly neglect the body. If a child can be made expert and discreet as a reader, accurate as an arithmetician, and skilful as a penman, we seem to care but little whether he possess any graces of carriage and manners; whether he say "yes," or "yes-sir," — "no," or "no-sir," or "no-siree!" whether he can enter a room with propriety, whether he can eat and drink decently, and not as a clown; whether he desiccate his system by a perpetual spitting, or save his saliva to aid the digesting of his food; whether he can address his equals with kindness, his inferiors with courtesy, and his superiors with respect, and bear himself gracefully and easily among them all. "I wish," says an English writer, "to see our people distinguished by good manners, not so much for the sake of these good manners, as because they indicate more than they show, and because they tend powerfully to nourish and protect the virtues which they indicate. What are they, when rightly considered, but the silent, though active expression of Christian feelings and dispositions? The gentleness, the tenderness, the delicacy, the forbearance, the fear of giving pain, the repression of all angry and resentful feelings, the respect and consideration due to a fellow man, and which every one should be ready to pay and ought to receive; what are all these, but the very spirit of courtesy? What are they, but the very spirit of Christianity? And what is there in them all, that is not equally an ornament to the palace and the cottage, to the peasant and the nobleman?"

Now the practical virtues named in this quotation are, I believe, indicative of the right spirit, the spirit

of Christianity. I know it may be argued, that a man may be cheerful in his temperament, graceful in his bearing, engaging in his manners and address, —and yet be destitute of a true Christian spirit. I grant it is true, and "pity 't is, 't is true." But in such case it is but the similitude of virtue, and not virtue herself, that appears. It is the counterfeit currency of the world, having selfishness for its great ingredient and alloy, and which is sure to be exposed, if it receive some smart rubs in its passing through men's hands. It is only skin-deep, and reaches not to the bones and the marrow. It is but surface-gilding, and the baser metal which it covers, is only concealed so long as nothing impinges, with rude friction, upon the exterior. But the true coin, the pure gold, the unadulterated twenty-four-carats fine of the real California metal, lasts through all severity of handling. Rough hands and rough blows only serve to polish it, and use and abuse both make it shine the more brightly. Nothing dims its lustre, and it brings, at all times, its full value in the great market of the world. Like this, are the gentleness, the courtesy of manner, the quiet dignity of bearing, that have their foundation in a true Christian heart, betokening "a wisdom from above, pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy," diffusing itself over the whole heart and conduct, and modelling the whole man after the truest pattern. So influenced and so fashioned, a man would eminently possess the best and most attractive manners, a gentleman, because *so gentle*, and in this view, refinement of manners becomes a polished link

in the great chain of Christian virtues, that chain which binds man to Heaven and to God, and which is yet the more closely to be entwined around the great heart of humanity, and to be drawn more and more firmly upward, till heaven and earth, joined in inseparable bands, shall eternally assimilate.

This winning spirit of true courtesy and Christian refinement of manners, will diffuse an alluring odor about the spot devoted to the Teacher's toil, and cannot fail to attract the impressible minds and hearts of those who frequent it. A grateful perfume is exhaled, at early dawn, from the mouths of well-filled hives, wherein "sweet honey-sucking bees,"—"from out of summer velvet buds," have closely stowed the pillage of the fields. All about the busy scene, where congregate the buzzing seekers after learning's grateful sweets, let the alluring perfume of winning ways and mild demeanor rejoice their hearts. I make this an important point for you, Teachers, to consider, and I say emphatically, that the school-room should never be a place, the associations of which are those of terror, dread and unhappiness. If there be any matter calling for unceasing effort on your part, it is that the place of gathering, should be to your pupils a spot of happy associations. In most instances it is the case, especially in the country, that the scholar is not, for a long-continued time, under the direct influence of the Teacher. The greater then should be his effort to make an early and deep impression. But if, by his ordinary treatment of those committed to his charge, such Teacher cause himself to be looked upon, as a sort of human machine, selected by a committee, to deal out a certain amount of blows, and to elaborate

a certain quantity of scolding and fretful vituperations, from the infliction of which the children are to insure themselves, by a certain per-centage of knowledge acquired, (and this would emphatically be called, the "pursuit of knowledge under difficulties,")—if such be his habitual and daily practice, that his pupils come into his presence with feelings of dread; if, on each morning, as they enter the precincts of his tyrannic realm,

> "The boding tremblers learn to trace
> The day's disasters in his morning face,"—

then, surely, to the pupils who gather beneath his frowns, the school-room is but a place of misery, and their fellowship with him but a fellowship of sorrow.

An ancient tyrant is said to have tormented his captured enemies, by fastening each live man to a dead body, and so leaving them, till death had possession of both. In that horrid and ghastly partnership, there was at least quietness, and that is denied to the live child, when in contact with a fretful, fault-finding, irascible master. Master? tyrant! Not instructor, guide, friend. I will sooner confide my child to a man of patient spirit and just discrimination, even though of less brilliant intellect and of inferior attainments, than to a man of profound acquirements, but who is so destitute of true wisdom, that he neither knows, nor can control, his own spirit, and in whose bosom there is perpetual peril of wrathful hurricanes and whirlwinds of rage. "Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife;" and "better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

Let there be no cloud upon your morning face; for, as was well observed by Mr. Mann, in one of his admirable Reports, "the storm which envelops a school by day, blighting all its joys and its benefits, is often only the spreading abroad of the cloud that lowered upon the Teacher's brow at morning." "For the noble office of improving others, the first step is self-improvement; for those who worship at the altar of this ministry, the first act of worship is the purification of the worshipper." From the impulsive and excitable Teacher of whom I have just spoken, every parent may justly beseech a good deliverance; and upon the place where he tyrannized, every child will be sure, in after life, to look back, as Bunyan's Pilgrim did upon the Slough of Despond, with shuddering reminiscence of his floundering therein, and with grateful emotions of joy for deliverance therefrom.

Let such a state of feeling never be known where you shall preside and instruct. The scene of your labors may possess every appliance and advantage, which can conduce to your comfort and success, and all about it may be replete with every charm of scenery that the eye loves to contemplate. Add to its attractions the pleasant associations of a calm, yet cheerful demeanor; of a confiding and heart-winning intercourse with your pupils, and so bind them to you by the ten thousand little ties which, with just tact and right judgment, you may, from time to time, twine around their hearts. In the well-known satire entitled "Gulliver's Travels," by Dean Swift, we are told that he visited a race of Pigmies, inhabitants of the Empire of Lilliput, and that they, feeble and diminutive as they were,

contrived to bind him immovably to the ground, by the hairs of his head, and by the slight cords which they wreathed about his limbs. There are countless little cords which you may use, most advantageously and securely, to bind the hearts of pupils, so that their affections can never be sundered from you. A look, a word, a smile, an encouraging tone given by you at the fitting time, even without apparent effort, may prove a silken cord, that no time can weaken and no accident of after-life can disunite.

> The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
> Imbibes and copies what it hears and sees;
> And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
> That Education gives it, be it false or true.

Your own character will stand forth in a thousand points, clear, bold, well-defined. Are you sudden in temper, unable to control yourself; hot, hasty, petulant, peevish,—what disasters may you not produce upon the pliant minds of the community wherein you preside! Are you slow to anger, mild, gentle, forgiving,—yet firm and energetic,—what miracles of good may you not effect! The tempest chafes and roars and blusters with windy fury, and the traveller the more closely binds his cloak about him, and resists. Then shines the sun, calm, steady, noiseless, yet gently energetic. The traveller unfolds his garment, lays it down, and yields.

What an object of pity is an enraged man, and what an object of pity and scorn is a frantic Teacher, to those of his pupils who have firmness and good sense enough not to be terrified by his temporary insanity! But a gentle firmness of manner, in seasons

requiring it, an even, cheerful, frank bearing, works a thousand-fold more upon the heart and the understanding. It speaks a language more intelligible, more significant, more persuasive. It allures, not drives; it wins, not terrifies; it binds with a golden chain, not fetters with an iron shackle. And when to this steady and cheerful deportment, are added the graceful proprieties and amenities of good manners, the collected and cultivated bearing of a true gentleman or lady, a charm is all about the person, that chains the willing heart, and that powerfully and pleasantly pervades the whole atmosphere of the school.

But it may be, that the place where you labor has none of the proper and requisite conveniences. The house may be a lame apology, the location a nude wilderness of a spot, upon which the farmer, who once owned it, would not put his hencoop nor his pigsty, and so sold it to the school-district;—rough, rude and rocky, not a tree, nor a shrub, nor a spot of green grass about it. The very barberry-bush avoids it, and grows half a mile off. So that it would not have entered the imagination of man to have built upon it any thing but a school-house. And years have passed by, and now the winds and the rain and the snows and the boys,—those wasteful elements of destruction, —have all fulfilled their several missions, and it is become a shaky shanty, with here a streak or so of red ochre, and there a worn spot of aged gray, and on the rattling shingle-top, fertile patches of bunchy moss. The chimney moans in the wind, with a cracked and asthmatic voice, and wheezing out the doleful song of age and bad mortar, bids a melancholy farewell to the

rotten roof. The door is but half a door, and will soon sink below the value of fifty per-cent. The windows would rattle, if there were glass enough in them to hold the wind. The old hats, that are stuck through the broken panes,—ah! painful sight!—can by no possibility be called "crown glass," for their crowns were long ago knocked out. Cold, cheerless, shameless type of the estimate placed upon the "young and blooming creation of God," which daily congregates therein. Sorry am I to say, that such things I have seen, though they are now of rarer occurrence.

Well, it is hard for you, hard for the children, infinitely worse for the reputation of the district. Make the best of it, so long as you stay, (though you will be fully justified in not staying long,) and so demean yourself, that, if it be possible, all thoughts of such shameless neglect may be lost in the happiness which you can make to reign even there.

> There let sweet peace and calm content be found,
> There sunny joy and smiling hearts abound;
> There be soft words and gentle tones to bless;
> There winning ways and locks, and kind address.

If it be so, the children, who, in a community that sanctions such neglect of their comfort, as scholars, must be pretty sure to find small happiness at home, will rejoice to meet you even there. They will sympathize with you. They will aid you. You will find little difficulty in governing them, and they will study and learn, because they will see that what profits them, gives you happiness. But, under all circumstances, secure their personal attachment by every

possible means. Let them feel the force and learn the value of commendation, by bestowing it upon them, with good judgment and right tact, when they do any thing well. What a blessed act it is to give well-merited praise, and how sparing some people are of it. It costs nothing; it calls for no sacrifice of true dignity, and the false you hardly need cultivate. It lessens you nowise, to notice and address your pupils, whenever or wherever you may meet them. A "Good morning," or a "Good evening," is vastly preferable to a stiff, starched, stately stalking, in your daily demeanor, as though you were vertebrated with a ramrod, and were lithophagous, and not human. How would you disappoint the hopes of some little member of your community, who, when he meets you,—

> For a smile or nod, receives a scowl,
> And for a cheerful word, a sullen growl.

Decently-bred dogs wag their tails and show unquestionable tokens of civilization, whenever they meet an acquaintance. Do not permit yourself to be reputed of inferior breeding.

Self-sacrifice is an important element, to be largely infused into the Teacher's character. He must rigidly school himself by the most steadfast and uncompromising discipline, and the more he thinks of others, and the less he thinks of himself, the greater will be his desire to do good, and his success in accomplishing that desire. One is most mindful of those nearest at hand, and one's self is always so particularly close at hand to one's self, that it is no easy matter to forget one's self. Out of sight, out of mind; and, *vice versâ*,

always in sight, always in mind. Self is ever before the mind's eye, and uppermost in the thoughts. Short and bleary-visioned as we are, we counsel most upon what may be for the more immediate benefit of self. The adventitious advantages which may, most palpably, show themselves to the outward eye, are sought for, and pursued with hot haste. The trapping and gearing and furnishing of the outward man, are bright meteors, that seduce the short vision of the great mass of mankind. No spiritual telescope seems to aid them in penetrating into a remoter heaven of intenser and more enduring stars, and no spiritual microscope reveals to their sight, the minute animalcula of congregated follies that float infused within the heart. The hopes are all for self; the aspirations are for self; the ambition is all for self. Some men's religion, even, seems to have been assumed, because they are rather disposed to think that, on the whole, it will be best in the long run. Good men these to the outer seeming; good, not for goodness' sake, and because goodness assimilates man to God, but rather because "godliness" may be "great gain," and a good investment. "Be ye not like unto them." Build no foundations upon a sand-heap of selfishness. Forget yourself, and let your best memories be of others. Look towards the millions. Promote the good of the masses. Imparadise not yourself within an Eden of your own making, careless of the throngs that are struggling and starving without.

Why, it makes an honest heart burn with indignant amazement, when it sees it inscribed, on every page of History, how successfully and how shamelessly, the few have made Gibeonites of the many,—

hewers of wood and drawers of water,—bondmen and bondwomen,—helots, gladiators, serfs, slaves,—diggers and ditchers,—laboring, drudging, sweating, starving, even fighting and slaying one another, and making widows and orphans,—all for sixpence a day; all in no better cause, than that some rarer diamond, of more brilliant hue, may be stolen from some eastern realm, to glitter mid the regalia, to beautify the brow, or flash and dazzle from the coronet of some imperial queen. Labor, I know, there must be. The wide world has, by man's toil, undergone, and must yet undergo great changes, to adapt it to man's varied purposes and wants. But I am yet to learn, that ignorance and debasement are essential to a supply of labor. The most productive labor is educated labor, and educated labor cannot leave the laborer either debased or poor. Man cannot live without labor. There must be food and houses and raiment, and the endless ministrations which comfort requires. Were all men rich as Crœsus, and wise as Solomon, and tender and delicate as babes, and were there no poor, no ignorant,—why then, the rich and the wise and the delicate must buckle to, and work, and produce for themselves. But the poor ye have, and always will have with you; and the equilibrium of society is best preserved, and its various classes are most prosperous and most happy, when property and labor fraternize, without jealousy and without oppression, under the influence of a wise and diffusive education.

It may be, doubtless it is, a severe task, to leave yourself, and live more for others. Habit will make it easy, and the habit must be formed while the heart is pliant and young. And you, Teachers, you to

whom confiding parents surrender the youthful bodies and the pliant minds of their children, for the great business of educating them both, you must begin the work, and begin it aright. Remember how forcible is example, and remember that it mightily overpowers all precept. Looks, actions, attitudes, expressions, modes of utterance, all are watched, all imitated. If you enter your room with your hat on your head,—(I once saw three teachers do it, and persevere in it, although the then excellent Chief Magistrate of Massachusetts was there present,)—will you reprove the thoughless, unsuspecting child, who copies the fault? If you speak ungrammatically; if you pronounce awkwardly and inelegantly; if you use words in an improper sense; if you are unseemly, careless, clownish in your dress, address, and general demeanor,—do you not know that your pupils will use your example and authority for being so too? Can you, with any expectation of success, attempt to teach, by words, the importance of a just and careful observance of all the rules of right behavior, when every word you utter is nullified by your example? If you are redolent of the fumes, or savor of the powder of that unwholesome and nauseous weed, which too often befouls men's mouths and noses; if you, by the daily influence of its pernicious use, show yourself to be a morbid and unhappy instance of unnatural salivation, can you complain, if some stout lad of your group, thinking the habit manly, mistakes the schoolroom for an overgrown spittoon, and makes illustrations of Black and Yellow Seas, all about the floor?

Can you expect your pupils to be studious, if they see and hear and know that *you* are an idler? De-

pend upon it, they will not fail to find it out. But with what propriety can you be an idle man? How can you have at your disposal any time for loitering? Are you so deeply versed in all learning, that all further study is a work of superfluity? Do you know so much, that you need know no more? It is indeed altogether probable, that you are sufficiently well acquainted with the particular books, selected for the particular studies that are pursued in the school in which you teach. But this is far from being sufficient. If you would be successful in imparting instruction in any assigned branch of knowledge, you must have something beyond a familiarity with the particular text-book adopted for that branch. If this were not the case, your task would be comparatively easy. You would be under the necessity of merely drilling yourself up to a certain amount, contained in a limited number of books, and spare yourself all further labor and study. Behold! your education is finished.

Now this will never answer. I maintain, that every Teacher, who would perform his work as it ought to be performed, must be devotedly studious, of very considerable reading, and of no ordinary amount of acquisition in such branches of learning as have *relation* to the several subjects upon which his pupils are engaged. His knowledge must be general, as well as particular; and when he shall have tasted the pleasure, and known the distinction of intellectual acquisition, he will be irresistibly impelled to further attainment. While drinking at the pure fountains of true learning, he will imbibe with every draught the spirit of self-cultivation, and that cultivation will aid

him in cultivating the same spirit in others. A great object of education is to originate an earnest desire for knowledge, not merely to store the head with facts. A crowded and overstocked memory must not be mistaken for a fertilized and improved mind. Against this error be cautiously guarded, and be indefatigable and doggedly obstinate in your pursuit of further truth. Get it, if by any means you may, for "the discovery of Truth is the highest, the noblest achievement to which a mortal can aspire,—the approbation of his own mind, the highest gratification a mortal can enjoy." *

There is, indeed, a barrier, beyond which the human intellect cannot advance. There are bounds to our knowledge, over which we cannot pass. They stand in barricade, where the finite borders on the Infinite, and where we can only gaze, and wonder, and adore!

Again, can you expect your pupils to heed your praises of truth, if they have, even but once, found you to be untrue? Do you not know, that at the earliest age, children are acute enough to detect all grimace, all counterfeiting? I venture to say, that in all cases when, as a new teacher, you enter upon a new sphere of action, the children of the school find out all *your* points, long before *you* get familiar with theirs. Your example is to them, and at once, the beginning, the continuance, and the end of your teaching. Do you desire them to be true, just, honest, studious, graceful in demeanor, forbearing, forgiving, religious? Let your unvarying example teach them that you

* J. R. Young's Lectures on Mathematics, supplied the leading thoughts of this paragraph.

are all these yourself. You have no right to be otherwise, under any circumstances, or in any position you may occupy. Specially have you no such right, if you occupy the responsible post of a Teacher, —responsible to man, responsible to society, and infinitely more responsible to God. You have no right, I say, to be untrue, unjust, dishonest, idle, irreligious. I will suppose that you are intrusted with the care and the education of my child,—*of my child!*—and what associations does not that word awaken in every parent's bosom! At this moment of speaking, my thoughts fly over yonder hills, to the homestead wherein my children dwell. I see them all,—yes, all!—her, from whose dimmed eyes, God hath, in His own good pleasure, withheld the matchless blessings of perfect vision, and over whose sight will soon close the darkest pall of

> "Total eclipse,—no sun, no moon,
> All dark, amid the blaze of noon!" *

and all the rest, for whom the light of Heaven irradiates rich scenes of joy and of gladness, in all the glorious beauty of their colors, and in all the exquisite harmony of their blending together. Clustered are they about my hearth, and still more closely twined around my heart. "God do so to me, and more also," if I forget or neglect the unspeakable, the awful responsibility, that abides upon me as their parent! And as thousands of parents have done and must do, each child has been intrusted to the care and training of others, to be prepared for duty and for happiness; yet not for this world alone, whose period is but a

* Milton's "Samson Agonistes."

drop in the great ocean of time,—whose duties are transitory and evanescent; not for this world alone! but for that other, yet to come, whose years are beyond the measure of all computing; whose joys, no mines of countless gold, no mountain-heaps of glittering diamonds, no holocaust of multitudinous sacrifice can purchase,—yet all within the good man's grasp! And as I say to their teacher, so may the yearning heart of each parent say, in like case, to you: "You have no *right* to be untrue, unjust, immoral, an idler, and irreligious! Remember,—remember! as you train my child, you are influencing its destiny for more than this world's time. There is something far beyond, infinitely grander, immeasurably more enduring, inconceivably vaster, which shall begin its endless duration, when time shall be swallowed up in Eternity; when earth's wide surface shall be whitened with the bones of those, whom there shall be no survivors to bury; when

> 'All worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
> The sun himself shall die,—
> And when this mortal shall assume
> Its immortality;—
> 'T is when the last of human mould
> Shall all Creation's death behold,
> As Adam saw its prime!' *

See to it, that you jeopard not the eternal bliss of my child! See to it, that no thought, no look, no word, no act of yours, imperil the safety of his undying soul! If you harm it, if you make it a castaway from happiness and from heaven, then, when you, and I, and the child, stand up for judgment at the bar of

* Campbell's "Last Man."

God, I will demand justice for the wrong; and justice shall be meted out, for God is neither untrue nor unjust! See to it, that you fail not in all these duties!"

Again. Do you desire, (and you certainly should desire it, and strive to accomplish the desire,) do you desire that your pupils should be graceful, easy, respectful,—ready in the practice of all the courtesies of refined society? Strive to illustrate the beauty of these graces in your own person. "The trophies of Miltiades will not let me sleep," said the young Themistocles, when he heard of the successes at Marathon. In a nobler cause, a mightier struggle with the giant powers of ignorance and vice, let the laurels of your brethren awaken a generous emulation, whose results shall benefit yourself and your profession, and make a deep and abiding mark upon the times in which you lived. We are too negligent, too thoughtless, upon the important topic I am discussing; and there is an occasional awkwardness, and sometimes an unpolished oddity in manners; an unseemly, ungraceful style of address and demeanor, an absence of what is called perfectness of good-breeding, plainly visible even to an eye of limited practice. Were it not so, and had it never been so, no Dr. Pangloss, no Dominie Sampson, no Ichabod Crane, would have entered into the imagination of fiction-writers. Well-bred foreigners notice and allude to this fact, as one of our national faults. Allow me, then, in the spirit of kindness, and in deep sympathy with your success,—for with the full strength of such feelings, have I come to hold a brief communion with you,—allow me to suggest, that these faults are specially noticeable in the remoter and more rural dis-

tricts of our country. There is a great and sincere spirit of kindness,—but the independence of feeling which pervades our people, has, in some unfavorable degree, detracted from the charm of that kindness, and rendered it less impressive, than if courtesy of manner had come as its grateful auxiliary.

You may even punish gracefully. On a certain great occasion of state, at the Court of St. James, her Majesty, the Queen of England, was compelled to practice an uncommon degree of patience, by the delay of the Duchess of Sutherland, one of her Maids of honor. At last, her Grace arrived, filled with apprehension that her tardiness would be rebuked. As she entered the presence of royalty, the Queen stepped forward, and placing about the neck of the trembling lady, an elegant, diamonded gold watch, simply observed, "Allow me, my dear Madam, to substitute this exact time-keeper, for the uncertain instrument, which has delayed your prompt arrival."

Now the quiet and graceful dignity with which this rebuke was administered, took the sting from its severity, and yet thoroughly cured the fault. Cannot you, Instructresses, who may hear me, practice the same, in the little realm of which each of you is the reigning Queen?

As President Washington, surrounded by a brilliant cortege of officers, was once passing through a street in Philadelphia, he was met by an aged negro, who raised his hat in token of respect. The General did the same; and when one of his attendants expressed surprise, he merely observed, "Would you have a negro surpass me in civility?" Cannot you, Instructors, practice an equal degree of courteous

bearing, in the little republic, of which each of you is the President?

I say then, and I desire to be remembered as having fully adopted the sentiment, that you, Teachers, have the greatest obligations and the weightiest responsibilities pressing upon you, and these you assumed, whether knowingly or thoughtlessly, when you ventured upon a vocation, which should bring all its energies to act upon minds that are to be illumined with the light of knowledge, upon hearts that are to be hallowed by the sanctity of religion, upon souls that are to dwell in the immediate effulgence of God present in Heaven.

> "A cloud of witnesses around,
> Holds you in full survey;
> Forget the steps already trod,
> And onward urge your way." *

Go on to perfection, by perfecting yourselves in the general example you may exhibit, in the words and language you may use, the manners and deportment that may distinguish you, the training to which you may subject your temper and your heart, the study and preparation for your great daily work, and in the religious character which your great vocation demands of you. For your position, in relation to all these matters, you are held in fearful responsibility.

Do you ask, "Who can be sufficient for these things?" I reply, "Be not discouraged. Be but faithful and just to your purpose. Be the *truth* in every relation;—speak it,—act it,—live it,—*because the truth is truth, and is of God!*"

* Watts.

At the shrine of an ancient Eastern divinity, a rich man brought his gold, a mighty man his fame and his power, a learned man his wisdom, and a certain poor man an honest heart and a penitent sigh. Each left his gift upon the altar, and went his way;—and lo! when the orient morn, "from out the starry sphere," upon the temple broke, the gold lay all untouched; the power was unheeded; the wisdom was despised; but, behold! the true heart and the penitent sigh rose on a sunbeam, and mingled in with Heaven!

MR. PRESIDENT, AND
GENTLEMEN AND LADIES OF THE INSTITUTE,

I feel, at this point, that I shall hardly be thought to be consistent with my own defence of a courteous bearing and a tender regard for the feelings of others, if I do not apologize to you, for detaining you so long. It is the cause that must plead for me; and my excuse shall be phrased, with some small change of a well-known couplet,—

> Brief I had been,—yet if prolonged "in aught,
> "The love I bear to Learning is in fault." *

It is the cause in which I speak that moves my inner heart. All my best sympathies are with it; and shame to me were it otherwise. Long years of patient toil, I spent within the four walls of the school-room, and many hours and scenes of happiness do I recall. And now that I have left them forever,—now that they are as the misty shadows of days that fled away with each setting sun, my heart exclaims: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget

* Goldsmith's "Deserted Village."

her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,—if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Yet why should I longer plead the cause of a widely-diffused education, of sound learning, and high mental culture, of deep religious feeling, of pure morality and of refinement of manners, before so intelligent a jury? The verdict swells upon your lips, and bursts upon mine ear. *You* are not content that the world shall stand still, and that the men and the women and the children thereof, shall be, and continue to be, as darkened and benighted, as they were before the flood. If the stand-still theory were the right one, why then "you and I and all of us," like the savage tenants whom our fathers found upon these shores, might still be taking our food, and putting it into our mouths with our fingers, from off a big shell or a piece of bark, and the knife and fork, and the chop-stick and the plate, be matters uninvented. If things were well enough as they were, the camel and the dromedary, the horse, and the ox, and the ass, would be quite sufficient for purposes of travel, and that great and terrible iron-courser, with his thundering tread, his hissing-hot breath, his shrieking whistle, his fiery trail, and his hurricane speed, as he dashes though your hills, would be as much unknown, as if iron had never been disembowelled from the earth, and water had never been boiled.

If things were well enough as they were, then the simple and frail canoe of

> "——the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
> Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind,"—

were sufficient for the navigation of the seas; and

those giant monsters of the deep, those huge leviathans of modern commerce, which, freighted with the multiform productions of men's wits and men's hands, and with men themselves, drive with resistless energy, against wind and wave, bringing into proximity people and nations, whom ocean vainly divides,—these matchless trophies of human skill and human daring, would be yet to burst upon the sight of an astonished world!

If things were well enough as they were, men would be still writing with the end of a reed, upon a perishing piece of bark, or on a liquescent table of wax,—and parchment and paper, and the gray-goose quill, and the steel and golden pen, be still beyond our grasp; while the leaden type, and the wiry telegraph, and the iron and steam printing-press, and, in fine, all the powerful appliances and engines of modern civilization, be as unknown to us, as was the steam-ship itself to the mariners of Noah's ark,—all matters for posterity, or nobody, to think about!

If things were well enough as they were, then war, and human slavery, and intemperance, those dread

> "Spirits of the nethermost abyss,
> Besmeared with blood
> Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,"—

horrible monsters, which curse and have cursed the fair face of earth almost since

> "Man's first disobedience
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe,"—

these may continue their accursed work, and never return to that deep, dark and demoniac nativity, of which alone they are congenial spirits!

No, my friends! I am persuaded, that with a doc-

trine so admirably adapted to chill the glowing spirit of the world's progress, to check all effort at improving the moral and intellectual character of the age, you, as men who love their fellow men, can have no sympathy. Your efforts, I am persuaded, will be in the opposite direction, and will be put forth to sustain a nobler cause. It is to promote that cause, that you have congregated here, joining heart with heart, and hand in hand. You have a great vocation before you, the high office of strengthening and improving "the instrument upon which, and with which, Education herself labors to fulfil her mission,—to expand the powers, to enlarge the grasp, to sharpen the perceptions of the intellect." * It is yours to excite in the mind a love of learning. It is yours to develop and invigorate the powers by which all learning shall be attained, and your first *successful* step, either in the training of yourself, or of others, is the sure and unmistakable prognostic of all future success. Let the mind be but once awakened to the beauties of science; let it but once imbibe a draught of that delicious stream, which, with perennial waters, wells forth from wisdom's sacred fountain, and it can never suffer its appetite to be satiated. The acquisition of knowledge begets the desire for more. Like Jealousy, "it makes what it doth feed on." And to awaken this desire, to incite this appetite, to quicken and invigorate all the powers of the intellect in the pursuit of food with which to supply this appetite, constitutes the great business of Education.

The time has indeed been, when philosophy and

* J. R. Young.

all learning was a sealed, and unknown, nay, almost an unseen book, to the great mass of mankind. A few individuals, whose inclinations, whose seclusion from the world, whose freedom from harassing cares and life-supporting toil; whose means and whose minds were all propitious to the favored possessor, and, fortunately for him, propitiously disposed for the work, attempted to achieve the undertaking, and to surmount the obstacles, which the ancient method of study and of education delighted to throw in the way of the scholar. The disciples of Plato listened to the instructions of their master five long years, before they were considered wise enough even to ask a question; and the novices of Druidism, the ancient religion of our primitive British progenitors, spent the longer period of twenty years in mastering the obscure and mysterious versification, under which all the profound learning of the Druidical priests was enveloped. But a brighter day has dawned. The temple of learning is no longer obscured by impervious clouds, and denied to the vision of those who would seek to enter and worship at the altar of the Divinity enshrined within. She herself is the uncompromising foe of all mystery and concealment, abhorring all pedantry and conceitedness of learning, and all the vain folly of intellectual pride. She holds out persuasive and substantial allurements to all men, of every grade and name, to enter her hallowed precincts. Unlike the fabled divinities of Grecian and Roman and Northern Mythology, she takes no votive offerings from her worshippers, but loads them all with precious gifts, in just proportion to the sincerity of their devotion. None are rejected, none unreward-

ed. "Riches and honor are with her,—her fruit is better than gold, her revenue than choice silver." Philosophy has been called down from heaven, and, obeying the summons, is now within the reach of ordinary minds; and lamentable and desperate beyond all hope of awakening, must be the lethargy of that intellect, which is not excited to effort, and, in some degree, at least, improved by the countless facilities and the generous offers of aid, which surround it. In the words of another: "Science is no longer cloistered in monasteries. It is no longer imprisoned in walled colleges. It is no longer buried in unknown tongues. It is no longer reverenced as supernatural inspiration. It is no longer the privilege of the few, and no longer, as, while abused, it too often proved, the scourge of the many." No, my friends, a flood of intellectual light is flashing round us, and who shall forbid that you, and I, and all, shall not be baptized in its beams, and bask in its shine, and be warmed and invigorated by its heat. The gates of the once impregnable Gaza of learning have been unhinged, and carried off, by the intellectual Samsons of modern times; the veil of the inner temple of wisdom is rent in twain, and the broad pathway into the innermost recesses is spread wide open to all who would enter. Wisdom herself "now crieth from within and from without. She uttereth her voice in the streets; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates: 'Behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make my words known unto you.'"

Knowledge may be had, (thanks to the liberality of many of our States, it is specially so for their sons

and daughters,)—it may be had "without money and without price." In the delightful path, which spreads its grateful fruits and flowers before our sight, the good, the great, the mighty, the truly noble, both in character and in rank, princes and subjects of every degree, the votaries of science of every name, age and sex, have thronged in dense array. With concentrated and successful effort, they have assisted in the good work of clearing away whatever hindrances, ages of scholastic selfishness had heaped up, as barricades against their progress, and in smoothing and adorning the way, for the good of those who are to follow after them. Genius brings forward her theories and her speculations, and invention supplies to experiment the means of bringing them to the test. Never could it more truly be said, that "Wisdom is justified of her children." Since the spirit of investigation was awakened by Bacon, that giant-minded pioneer in inductive science, a host of ingenious and gifted men have arisen, who have made, and announced to the world the most wonderful discoveries. The race is not yet extinct. Why should I detain you, to recount their names and their deeds? They urged forward the car of human progress; they widened the phylacteries of human knowledge; they ennobled science and art, and the very good they wrought for others, immortalized themselves. The gloomy, sullen shade of ignorance and vice fled before the sun, which, with "healing in its beams," darted its light athwart their eastern skies.

"So, when the sun, from his watery bed,
All curtained with a cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,

The flocking shadows, ghastly pale,
All troop to their infernal jail;
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave." *

Yet, much as they accomplished, they garnered not in, all the fruits of the teeming fields of knowledge. Other and greater discoveries are yet to come; and who shall say, that some of those whom you are skilled to train and prepare for the work, shall not reap and bind the ample sheaves, and bear them rejoicing home? The deep debt of gratitude imposed upon us by the wise labors and thoughtful forecast of our ancestors, we must not fail to meet, and to pay, with full interest added. Nor must we fail to toil as sedulously for the good of posterity, as our progenitors toiled for our good, and we cancel the debt that we owe, just so far as we are earnest and successful in this duty. The good or the evil of untold generations will be influenced by what we do, and fearful is the responsibility. That all but limitless realm, that lies far towards the western sun, is to be tenanted by the countless throngs of unborn Americans. Upon these is our influence to operate, upon their minds is our teaching to bear; and whether rich garners of virtuous fruits shall send a blessed odor to their skies, or the noxious weeds of vice shall taint their moral atmosphere with pestilence and death, can alone be determined by success or failure, in planting and rearing, on every acre of that wide domain, the manners, the morals and the institutions that bless and adorn New-England.

* Milton's "Christmas Hymn," as varied in Handel's "Samson."

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